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In Rugby, Virginia, is the workshop of Wayne Henderson, the master musician and luthier who has made guitars for Doc Watson and Eric Clapton. Learning from those before him, Wayne generously gives to the next generation.

51 words

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Nestled near the foot of Mount Rogers is the small town of Rugby, Virginia. It is here that one can find the home and workshop of Wayne C. Henderson, the master musician and master luthier who has made guitars for the likes of Doc Watson and Eric Clapton. Wayne was generously taught and encouraged by those around him. Learning much more than just guitar building and playing, Wayne continues to do the same for the younger generations.

92 words

“...A nice visit to the shop here without having to travel to Rugby.” ~Wayne Henderson

Nestled near the foot of Mount Rogers is the small town of Rugby, Virginia. It is here that one can find the home and workshop of Wayne Henderson, a skilled craftsman and respected musician. Wayne was taught and encouraged by those around him including the folk hero E.C. Ball and the kind and generous fiddle maker, Albert Hash. Henderson was awarded the National Endowment for the Art's National Heritage Fellowship for his work as a luthier and musician.

Producing over 400 guitars for the likes of Doc Watson and Eric Clapton, the quality of Wayne's instruments have created a famous waiting list of ten years. Equally as famous is Wayne's reputation for being generous, friendly, and very approachable as a musician and an instrument maker. Many travelers along the Crooked Road learn this first hand as visitors to Wayne's shop and music festival every year.

From Wood to Singing Guitar is a chance for those who can't make it to Rugby to have that same wonderful experience. This intimate portrait allows viewers the opportunity to watch a master practice his craft, hear a musician play the songs of his home, and visit with friends.

209 words

Grayson County, Virginia is home to an extraordinary number of celebrated musicians both past and present, and because of the passionate pursuit of traditional music among both the children and the adolescents of the area, there is confidence that the celebration will continue for future generations.

Nestled near the foot of Mount Rogers is the small town of Rugby, Virginia. This is where the most revered musician and luthier living in Grayson County today has his home and workshop: Wayne C. Henderson. Wayne's talent as a musician has taken him across this country and around the world. He has played for five National Folk Festivals since 1977, performed four times at the Smithsonian's Festival of American Folklife, has toured Asia for the United States Information Agency, appeared in Europe, has showcased the regional music of Southwest Virginia on the national Masters of the Steel String Guitar tour, and has even represented the NEA's Folk Arts Program at the National Council on the Arts annual meeting. Despite his celebrity, visitors to the area can still find Wayne sitting in on local jam sessions, competing in the Galax Old Time Fiddler's Convention, or playing a local fundraiser to help defray someone's health care costs. For those lucky enough to be in Grayson County the second weekend in June, Wayne always performs at The Wayne C. Henderson Festival and Guitar Competition in Grayson Highlands State Park, just up the mountain from Rugby (population of eight including Wayne), his now famous home.

The only thing that outshines Wayne's dazzling guitar playing is his reputation as a luthier. In 1995, the NEA honored him with a National Heritage Fellowship, as both a luthier and a musician. The waiting period for a Henderson guitar is the subject of much good humor among those on the list. Many were hopeful that once Wayne retired from his full-time job as a rural mail carrier that the waiting period would be drastically reduced, but as his reputation increased so did the list grow longer. When it took Eric Clapton nine years to get a custom-made Henderson guitar, the wait took on legendary proportions and became the subject of Wall Street Journal reporter, Alan St. John's book, *Clapton's Guitar: Watching Wayne Henderson Build the Perfect Instrument* (Simon and Schuster). With Clapton's permission, Wayne made an exact replica of his guitar which brought \$31,000 at auction. All of the proceeds from this sale went to his scholarship fund, as do the gate receipts from his festival, as well as the \$10 each raffle ticket gets for a chance to win a Henderson guitar. The scholarships which are handed out to the area's young musicians on the stage at Wayne's festival, can be used for either private music lessons or college tuition and are not limited to the study of only traditional music. Wayne's scholarship program has been in existence for about ten years and in that time he has helped many grateful recipients pursue their love of music.

As a young boy fascinated by both the playing and the making of guitars, Wayne received attention and mentoring from two of his neighbors, E.C. Ball and Albert Hash.

E.C.'s influence is easily heard in Wayne's unique finger-picked style, and renowned fiddle maker, Albert Hash, had a monumental influence on Wayne's craft. Until his death in 1982, every guitar Wayne Henderson built was taken to Albert for his critique.

Wayne's gratitude to E.C. and Albert has been repaid to his community tenfold. Although his instruments could fetch prices only the very wealthy could afford, he sells them reasonably so

musicians can have a decent instrument to play. He frequently donates instruments to local causes, and his generosity inspires others to do the same. The winners of a local youth competition walk away not only with the glory of being named the best in their category, but with a Henderson guitar, an Edmonds fiddle, an Anderson/Strickland mandolin, and a Barr Banjo in hand. The encouragement, incentive, and attention our young people receive from these local masters inspires unbelievable enthusiasm for the music, the culture, and the tradition.

As if all this were not enough, Wayne could easily be “the last comic standing” with his hilarious stories of the people and the happenings in and around Rugby. He has stage presence both on and off stage, and no one ever seems to tire of his tales no matter how often repeated. His timeless stories elicit pure joy and laughter without resorting to vulgarities or demeaning strategies.

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815 words

Bio:

Shawn Lind, a graduate of Ohio University, started working with Appalshop during the summer of 2005. Being involved in many projects at the media arts non-profit, Lind started filming his first documentary in the spring of 2008. After a year of shooting and editing, *From Wood to Singing Guitar* had its world premier at Appalshop's annual Seedtime on the Cumberland Festival.

Media:

www.appalshop.org/henderson

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tXkVyom3v-g&feature=channel_page

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1TJdUCVDkSs&feature=channel_page

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=150TkqOFq3w&feature=channel_page

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